

USSN 09/401,730
Group Art Unit: 2878
Docket No. 161-P-DAL035BUS01

REMARKS

Claim Amendments

Independent claims 1 18 and 23 have been amended by adding the word "direct" between "at least one fiber being brought into" and "contact with at least one photo-element" pursuant to the Examiner's suggestion in paragraph 4. Support for the amendment can be found in the Figures. No new matter has been added.

Rejections over Komatsu '723

Claims 1 - 4, 18 and 23 - 25 have been rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) over Komatsu. These rejections, over the claims as currently amended, are respectfully traversed.

Claims 1, 18 and 23 have been amended to add the limitation that the fiber is brought into "direct" contact with the photo-element.

Komatsu discloses a securing device for releasably connecting an optical fiber 12 to an optical module 16 (light receiving or emitting means). The device comprises a receptacle body 11 having, at a front face, a bottomed bore or blind hole 14 to receive and secure an end of a ferule 13 at the end of a fiber 12. A circular recess 17 for receiving and securing the optical module 16 is formed on the rear face of the receptacle body 11. Thus, the blind hole 14 and the recess 17 are separated by bottom portion 15 (column 4, lines 9 - 22).

The inner bottom face 21 of blind hole 14 of Komatsu is flat and normal to the axis of the blind hole, so that the fiber 12 is contacted directly with the bottom face 21 (column 4, line 42). By virtue of this and of the same refractive index, reflection of light at the interface between the inner bottom face 21 of the blind hole and the end face of the fiber 12 is avoided. Furthermore, the rear face 22 of bottom portion 15 (inner bottom face of recess 17) is inclined with respect to the axis of the blind hole in order to avoid refraction of light at the rear face 22 (paragraph bridging columns 4-5, background and summary of invention).

USSN 09/401,730
Group Art Unit: 2878
Docket No. 161-P-DAL035BUS01

Thus, it can be seen in Komatsu that the fiber is not in direct contact with the photo-element as now required by independent claims 1, 18 and 23.

The present claims are directed to a direct contact coupling, where the "optical" problems solved by Komatsu do not arise. A person of ordinary skill in the art attempting to solve the problem of the present invention would not look at Komatsu who solves an entirely different problem.

Thus, independent claims 1, 18 and 23, as amended, are not anticipated by nor rendered obvious in view of Komatsu. The remainder of the rejected claims are dependent on one of these independent claims and, thus, can not be anticipated nor rendered obvious by Komatsu.

Claims 1 - 4, 18 and 23 - 25 should now be allowable over Komatsu.

Summary

With the amendments made and the arguments presented and with the previously indicated allowable subject matter, claims 1 - 18 and 22 - 29 should now be allowable, this application should be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

September 24, 2003



William D. Bauer
Registration No. 28,052

IPLM Group, P.A.
Broadway Place West, Suite 6600
1300 Godward Street NE
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55413-1741
Telephone: 612-331-7405
Facsimile: 612-331-7401